SEDAR 61 Assessment Workshop Webinar VI
Gulf of Mexico Red Grouper
July 16, 2019 from 1:00 PM to 2:20 PM
Summary Report

Projections

Projections will assume constant recruitment using data from 2010-2017. Selectivity, retention, and catchability are all fixed at 2017 levels. 2018 landings are available for inclusion, and projections are nearly identical between using actual 2018 landings or the placeholder of the 2018 ACL. As such, 2018 landings will be used. 2019 landings will be affected by an ACL reduction, the result of an emergency rule requested by the Council and implemented by NMFS. For 2019, commercial vertical line and longline fleets will be assumed to catch their fish according to the landings ratio demonstrated in 2017 (30% vertical line and 70% longline). Recreational removals for 2019 are projected to be similar to 2018; as such, 2018 recreational landings will serve as a placeholder for 2019 recreational landings.

Projections without red tide show optimistic increases in retained yield at F_{MSY} ($F_{30\%SPR}$) and, to a lesser degree, at F_{OY} (75% of $F_{30\%SPR}$). Concurrently, depletion curves show SSB below the SSB_{MSY} target when fishing at F_{MSY}, while the other curves at lower harvest levels show decreased depletion and growth in SSB. All harvest levels do not result in the stock dropping below MSST ($0.5*B_{MSY}$).

Severity of 2018 Red Tide Event

Ecosystem efforts by the SEFSC have gathered local knowledge and input from areas affected by red tide in southwestern and west-central Florida. These interviews gathered information on the location, intensity, longevity, and distribution of red tide. Data were recorded on the development of the blooms, species affected, possible ecosystem indicators of a pending red tide, and social and economic effects. Compared to previous red tide events, the 2017-2018 event was proportionally more "devastating" than previous events. Fishermen indicated that the 2017-2018 event also lasted longer than previous events.

When incorporating red tide into the projections, the estimated severity of the red tide directly affects the amount of retained yield possible. In any case, the stock may require up to 15 years to rebuild to SSB_{MSY}. Projecting to SSB_{OY} is more optimistic, with varying but generally fewer years required to rebuild to SSB_{OY} (75% of $F_{30\%SPR}$). Regardless of the estimated red tide severity, retaining the 2019 ACL (based on 2017 catch) is key to rebuilding the SSB. The estimated severity will ultimately help inform estimates of how long it will take to reach SSB_{MSY}. The probability of overfishing having occurred (>50% probability) is greater as the retained yield increases, and is directly affected by the estimated red tide severity.

The Panel noted the discrepancy between the projected yield and the recent landings. Projected yields are near or in excess of 6 million pounds gutted weight (with the exception of fixing yield at 2017 levels), while recent landings have been just over 4 million pounds gutted weight (2017

landings). Panel members contested that the effort on the stock is not being limited, yet fishermen are still not landing the fish. Therefore, projections currently seem overly optimistic, given recent landings.

The Stock Assessment Report is due to the Gulf Council by July 26, 2019

Participants:

Julie Neer	Doug Gregory	Matt Smith
Ryan Rindone	Jeff Pulver	Mike Colby
Skyler Sagarese	Kelly Fitzpatrick	Mike Drexler
Beverly Sauls	Linda Lombardi	Rich Malinowski
Bob Gill	Mandy Karnauskas	Ted Switzer
Dave Chagaris	Mary Christman	Will Patterson